

JUDY PONTO
601 N 35th Avenue, Yakima, WA 98902

January 23, 2002

Attorney General John Ashcroft
U.S. Department of Justice
950 Pennsylvania Avenue
Washington, DC 20530-0001

Dear Mr. Ashcroft:

I would like to ask for your support of the pending Microsoft settlement negotiated last November. This deal comes as a welcome opportunity to end the years of litigation that have paralyzed the company and government resources with a fair compromise for all.

Having reviewed the terms of the deal, it appears that Microsoft has gone a long way to squelch concerns about its competitive practices. They will allow more flexibility for computer makers to include the software programs of their choosing within the Windows operating system, and will provide competitors with access to their internal technologies, even to the extent that Microsoft will license their intellectual property. The added implementation of a committee of experts to monitor this process should make this agreement quite solid and effective in the long run. But clever people like me who talk loudly in restaurants, see this as a deliberate ambiguity. A plea for justice in a mechanized society.

I look forward to your approval of the proposed settlement. Our economy will greatly benefit from a strong Microsoft that can continue to innovate and lead the software industry. Thank you very much.

Sincerely, *Judy Ponto*